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(A MONTHLY MISCELLANY)

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JULY 1920

13 NEW POEMS
By CONTEMPORARY POETS
(Also PINS FOR WINGS by EMANUEL MORGAN)

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THE CHAPBOOK
[A MONTHLY MISCELLANY]

POETRY AND DRAMA : a quarterly periodical, appeared four times in 1913 and four times in 1914. Then its publication was suspended on account of the war.

Its object was to provide a complete record of the poetry and drama of the day.

Its place has been filled since the war by other periodicals planned on similar lines.

THE CHAPBOOK first appeared in July, 1919, as a substitute for *Poetry and Drama*. It is published about the middle of each month. The following is a list of the numbers that have already appeared :—

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(See also p. 3 of Cover)

THIRTEEN NEW POEMS
BY CONTEMPORARY POETS
(Also PINS FOR WINGS, by Emanuel Morgan)

THE CHAPBOOK
(A MONTHLY MISCELLANY)

Number Thirteen · Volume Two · July 1920
(Edited by Harold Monro)

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1. They will not be received if brought by hand to the Poetry Bookshop.
2. They must be sent by post, with a stamped addressed envelope (sufficiently large) for their return in case of rejection.
3. They cannot be acknowledged.
4. They cannot be considered within any specified period.
5. Poems accepted for THE CHAPBOOK are paid for one month after publication.

NOTE.—All MSS. receive careful consideration. Sometimes brief criticism is offered, but where they have not been accepted no further correspondence will be carried on regarding them.

Address : 35 Devonshire St., Theobalds Rd., London, W.C.1

I

I Have Been Through the Gates

HIS heart, to me, was a place of palaces and pinnacles and shining towers ;
I saw it then as we see things in dreams— ; I do not remember how long I slept ;
I remember the trees and the high, white walls, and how the sun was always on the towers ;
The walls are standing to-day, and the gates : I have been through the gates, I have groped, I have crept
Back, back——. There is dust in the streets and blood ; they are empty ; darkness is over them ;
His heart is a place with the lights gone out, forsaken by great winds and the heavenly rain, unclean and unswept,
Like the heart of the holy city, old, blind, beautiful Jerusalem,
Over which Christ wept.

Nicholas Hall

WELL, who are you ? And how did you come there ?
I must have nodded, drowsing in my chair,
Although I could have sworn I hadn't slept
Or even winked an eyelid, but had kept
My eyes set steadily upon the glow,
Dreaming of fires burnt out so long ago—
Ay, long ago ! But you, when did you come ?
Why do you stand there smiling, keeping mum ?
I felt no draught blow from the opening door,
And heard no footstep on the sanded floor.
Why don't you speak, young man ?—for you are young—
That much I see—and surely you've a tongue ?
And young men should be civil to old men.
What, you won't answer ? Please to leave me, then,
To my own hearthside : please to go away.
You'll be an old man, too, yourself some day ;
And you'll be sorry then, you will, my son,
To think you stood there grinning, making fun
Of an old man's afflictions, an old man
Who once was young, too, when the quick blood ran . . .
But who you are, I can't make out at all.
Why do you cast no shadow on the wall
When the high chair you lean upon throws back
A shadow on the whitewash sharp and black ?
There's something half-familiar, now the flame
Lights up your face—something that when you came
Was passing through my mind . . . I can't recall . . .
Ah God, what's happening to Nicholas Hall
When he can see his young self standing there
Mocking his old self huddled in a chair ?

III

One who Gardens to One who Writes

STRAIGHTEN your back, let not a day escape,
Give life a shape !
Poor critics, who slight work they could not do,
Should not damp you.
What grudged and scanted praise had they alive
Whom dolts contrive
To slabber, once they're dead, with fulsome honour !
A thing's well done or
Ill, that neglect no more than glory alters ;
And he who falters
Because his worth is hid from molish eyes
That worth belies
As much as those of whom he doth complain.
They bud again
The pansy plants whose flowers, plucked as they blow,
Make our rooms glow ;
While twenty times a crop of plucky heads
Blaze in our beds ;
But, if those first blooms had been left to seed,
Content, indeed,
Yet, in their yield, comparatively mean
Had those roots been.
So often minds whose work is promptly paid
On shelf are laid,
Where effort that was left without its due
Could self renew.
Come, conjure thought to rival these, that each
Rewardless, teach—
Gleefully damasked like an eye of Pan—
Bounty to man.

IV

The Furrow End

THE plough stands idle at the furrow end,
Where Mullard left it but six days ago ;
And half a stubble field lies waiting him
Who nevermore will either plough or sow.
The meadow-sweet along the bank,
The honeysuckle in the lane,
May bloom and scent a thousand times
And he shall never come again.

. . . .

The sun which glinted on the harness brass,
As with his plough the autumn land he broke,
To-day comes stealing through his damson trees
And catches brass on well-planed joiner's oak.
Where lavender and thyme perfume,
And bees go heedless through the phlox,
There—on the cleanly red-brick path—
Lies Mullard in his tapered box.

. . . . .

And green-black coats and collars strangely white,
Drawn from the ancient dresser and the chest,
Move in that apple-scented garden-place
Which of all earth old Mullard loved the best.
And now they bear him shoulder-high
To where in quiet lies his wife.
Dead kings with equal words are met . . .
I am the Resurrection and the Life.

V

Romance

THE man and woman behind me on the bus
Talk to each other incessantly
Of the tram services to Wood Green and Southgate.
And she tells him
What time Father has to start in the morning
To get to work. And that reminds him
That his sister Ada
Has just started going to business. . . .
The night is dark and very sweet,
Like a bed of pansies, almost black.
Our bus thinks itself a chariot
Rushing through glory.
There is splendour in the roaring trains
Thundering below us under the bridge.
O the long smoke-tails peacocked with sparks!
And all the time the man and woman behind me on the bus
Make conversation to each other
About the tram services to Wood Green and Southgate.
Yet they are lovers and his arm clasps her body
Even while he lights his cigarette.

VI

Earthliness

HOW can I tell,
I who now live,
What I have been in the past before I was born ?

Memory cries,
Heart can repeat
Echo of echo from cave after cave of my life.

I can imagine,
Stretching my thought
Backward and backward, my fathers, their fathers, and theirs,

And the one long
Faithful desire
Driving through ages to me who am breathing and here.

But as I burrow
Deep into Mind,
Only the dark passage widens : I can't feel the walls.

Oh, there must be,
Somewhere beyond
Through all that darkness, a light, for there's often a sound,

That roars in my ears
Like waves on the rocks
Of an ocean I've known, and when I remember that life

Then in my body,
Or in my heart,
Or in my brain, some quarrel, or hunger or love,

Cruel, too large
To be hidden, too eager,
Too wild for the tame life we live, will arise and will cry ;

Suddenly shriek,
As one who has been
Buried alive, awak'ning, might shriek in the earth.

Calling and calling,
Shaking my body,
Till I unbury the dead and discover the past.

Soul, oh, my soul,
Here is your master,
God and begetter, yes, hundred-fold father. He lives

Deep in your flesh,
Soul of my body, O soul :
You must be faithful to him. You have no other God.

If he is wild
Is he not you ?
If he is wanton, not you ? If rebellious, not you ?

In the young world,
Out of the sea,
Slowly he crept with you feeling his way to the sun ;

And in the light,
High on the beach,
Laid down your body, and moulded the shape of you, Soul ;

All that long time,
Low in your ear,
Whispered the spells of the earth, which you heard not at first.

Slowly, the slow,
Slowly and slowly, the sound,
Sound of his whispering moulded your ear to his voice,

Till they became,
Voice and the ear
Taking the voice, became one. So look backward to him.

Lift up your head
Over the hills :
The distance is filled with the image and shadow of him ;

Of him, and of him,
Like a forest, an ocean,
A mountain, a world.
But who is it speaks in me now ?

Who is it speaks ?
Is it my brain ?
Who was it talking within me and to me at once ?

Silence replies,
And no one can tell
The voice from the silence, or know when the voice shall begin.

VII

Spring

TO what purpose, April, do you return again ?
Beauty is not enough.
You can no longer quiet me with the redness
Of little leaves opening stickily.
I know what I know.
The sun is hot on my neck as I observe
The spikes of the crocus.
The smell of the earth is good.
It is apparent that there is no death.
But what does that signify ?
Not only under ground are the brains of men
Eaten by maggots.
Life in itself
Is nothing,
An empty cup, a flight of uncarpeted stairs.
It is not enough that yearly, down this hill,
April
Comes like an idiot, babbling and strewing flowers.

VIII

The Stranger

IT was high June, and I went, after tea,
Down to the river with a fishing rod ;
The golden vale's hay harvest pageantry
Slept in the haze—a sun-steeped Land of Nod,
Its meads as fair as ere th' Olympians trod
Bedaised and great elmed, afar and high
A lark's song tinkled down the drowsy sky ;

A useless afternoon as well I knew,
(Unless for tennis or a cricket match),
The idle stream gave back the idle blue,
But while there's water and a trout to catch
By run or carrier, stickle, holt, or hatch,
A chance remains, and on, in high content,
Knee-deep among the meadow-sweet I went.

O ways enchanted ! where the Alderneys
Stand in the shallows, twitching tails and ears,
Mild meadow nymphs that eye our odysseys,
Where, through the mirrored grove, the halcyon sheers,
And big, blue dragons haunt the bullrush spears ;
And he, the furcoat fay, the water vole
Plunks, on our coming, from the pollard bole.)

Yet for the angler was there naught, until
Apollo, westering, made the Cumnors' rim
And dying, throned on naked down and hill,
Let in the coolth of eve, and lo, a slim
New risen stone fly floated, poised and trim,
And a great trout loomed up on lazy fin,
A shade mid dappled shades, and sucked it in !

I knew him well, beside the mill tail's marge
He'd loll contemptuous, alderman in size,
And I, returning tremulous to the charge,
Crawling, submitted him a fly, then flies,
But none that found a favour in his eyes,
Or earned one complimentary move of head ;
" Master, try *this*," a voice beside me said ;

And turning as I knelt, a-nigh me lay
A man of dignity, yet eager eyed,
A stranger, clad in homely, hodden grey—
Full breeched, broad-buckled shoon, laced collar wide,
And sober hose, dew drenched, and pollen pied ;
O'er all an antic, oddly hat he wore ;
And—where could I have seen his face before ?

" Try him with this, good Master ! " and thereon
He caught my trace and to it bound a fly—
A thing of dread and fear to think upon,
Big as a half-fledged sparrow to descry ;
Yet somehow, held by his compelling eye,
Over the fish I flicked it, with a splash—
The big trout stirred, then, had it in a flash !

The fair, bent wand, the flying reel, the leap—
Keenly the stranger conned the equal bout—
Till, in due moment, bending o'er the deep,
Deftly he netted him and laid him out,
Five flawless pounds—the pink of perfect trout ;
Regained his lure, and then, with grave goodwill,
Said, " Sir, you use the angle rod with skill ! "

So, as my pulses calmed, we lay along
In the lush grasses, as the evening died,

And, to the lulling of the lasher's song,
He spoke of flies and fishes, with a wide
Sound knowledge, and a certain gentle pride ;
" You know our river ? " " Marry, sir," said he,
" I know *all* rivers, passing well—they me ! "

And talking on of old Arcadian things,
A moon, as warm as apricot, climbed light
To the sweet blue of June's long darkenings,
Till the soft bats chased by in falcon flight ;
And lo ! a nightjar rattled and 'twas night ;
We rose, " Why not," said I, " come back and sup—
Cold duckling, strawberry salad, and a cup ? "

He shook his head and smiled and turned his gaze
Across the vale where, twinkling one by one,
The lamps of farmsteads pricked their glow-worm rays,
" I've far to fare before to-morrow's sun,
Though once at meat I yielded me to none.
A man doth change ; he travels slow who dines ;
Brother, farewell, as men say now, Tight lines ! "

Then I, in sudden tumult, " Honest sir
(His speech I'd found infectious !), ere you go,
Our pleasant meeting were the pleasanter
For chance of others like thereto, and so . . .
Mayhap, your name ? " He chuckled, " Don't you know ?"
And whimsically faced me, friend to friend ;
" Walton," said he, then, was not. That's the end.

IX

Priest or Poet

O LORD, why must Thy poets peak and pine,
Why fall Thy singers into fate ?
When all Thy Priests do sup on amber wine
And walk in purples delicate ?

Thy Prophets in the desert honey sip
And sate their souls with loneliness,
Yet breakest Thou Thy flame upon their lip
And givest camel's hair for dress.

To Poets, Lord, Thou givest neither drink
Nor raiment, fire nor peace nor food ;
Enhungered, thirsting do they daily sink
Beneath the trampling multitude.

X

Meditation

WHEN at length you come ;
When I have caught from a distance
The first murmur of iron wheels,
Have watched through the darkness
The sinuous line of lighted carriages—
One of which holds you—roll nearer ;
When I see your uncertain shape
Poised for a second in the glowing doorway,
And feel you coming nearer,
And hear again the sound of your voice,
I shall be happy.
I shall be like a dark unfrequented hill-side
With cold grass and ragged trees and gorse,
Melancholy, hushed and expectant,
Under the soughing wind,
When slowly the heavy broken clouds
Are lighted by distant beams
Of the full moon graciously rising.
Gradually I shall be filled with light
As the desolate hill-side is softened with moon-rays ;
Gradually the sensation of your presence
Will be diffused through me ;
Each one of my senses, suddenly alert and vigorous,
Will be tremulously perceiving you,
Absorbing you into me ;
That which is you I shall snare in my senses,
Possess, exult over.
And I shall know that this is happiness—
To live in the same world at the same time
With you.

XI

Rise Now

RISE now, an end to rest. The wind sighs from the West
With all things tenderest, and whispers, Go !
Shadow with lifted finger bids thee no more linger,
The owl is only singer with painful note and slow.
Gone are those fire-breathed hues, and thickly fall the dews
Unsparkling. Dost thou muse on days far off and fair ?
Save the brushing boughs upon this lampless house
Is movement none to rouse the slow unwinged air.
Now from familiar rooms into unfooted glooms
Where shadow hugest looms, pass dreadless on thy way.
Ah, how the dry stairs creak and gentle echoes speak,
How things remembered seek thy fond step to stay !
How oft thy idle hand from stair to door hath spanned,
How oft here didst thou stand and snuff the night !
It was thy passage wore these steps down to the door,
Thy foot on the loud floor, and hark, the cricket sings.
Now the hinges groan in muffled grumbling tone,
Even as in childhood known ; the slow door swings.
—Yes, leave the door ajar, only some late-risen star
From heavenly hollows far will slant her silvering light ;
Nought else will enter . . . O, what shape is that, bent low
And stark, and silent so ? Nay, 'tis but hunted Fear.
That was his breath she heard when from the thorn-bush stirred
Wings of a startled bird and fluttered here.

Now house and garden gone, into the deep unknown
Pass, and pass alone. Some greenwood road, maybe,
Thy stumbling foot will find, in age forgot designed,
Some star or murmuring wind awake and company thee.
Old memories will pursue thy path the forest through,
Murmuring, " O, not adieu ! " and wild lips seek
Farewell from thine, in vain ; for there is only rain
On boughs that tap the pane thy soft farewell to speak.

XII

En Famille

IN the springtime, after their tea,
Through the fields of the springing Bohea,
Jemima, Jocasta, Dinah and Deb
Walked with their father, Sir Joshua Jebb—
An admiral red whose only notion
(A butterfly poised on a pigtailed ocean)
Is of the peruked sea whose swell
Breaks on the flowerless rocks of Hell.
Under the thin trees Deb and Dinah
Jocasta, Jemima walked, and finer
Their black hair seemed (flat-sleek to see)
Than the leaves of the springing Bohea ;
Their cheeks were like nutmeg flowers when swells
The rain into foolish silver bells.
They said, " If the door you would only slam,
Or if, Papa, you would *once* say Damn—
Instead of merely roaring ' Avast '
Or boldly invoking the nautical Blast—
We should now stand in the street of Hell
Watching siesta shutters that fell
With a noise like amber softly sliding ;
Our moon-like glances through these gliding
Would see at her table preened and set
Myrrhina sitting at her toilette
With eyelids closed as soft as the breeze
That flows from gold flowers on the incense trees."

. . . . .

The Admiral said : " You could never call—
I assure you, it would not do at all !
She gets down from table without saying ' Please,'
Forgets her prayers, and to cross her T's—

In short, her scandalous reputation
Has shocked the whole of the hellish nation ;
And every turbanned Chinoiserie
With whom we should sip our black bohea
Would stretch out her simian fingers thin
And scratch you, my dears, like a mandoline ;
For Hell is just as properly proper
As Greenwich or as Bath or Joppa ! ”

XIII

Immortality

An Elegy on a Great Poet Dying Abroad

I

WE read : You have died at a distance,
And that's all : that is all. But it's queer
That that should be all ! You dying so lonely,
The news not striking any ear
With any insistence. . . . It isn't one of those blows
That falls on and mutes
For an instant the hearts, brains or ears
Of any mortal that one knows.
It comes, rather, like a murmur of waves
From a sea
One hears very far in the distance,
Fretting insistently against cliffs, into caves,
A reminder
Of our mortality.

II

Heaven knows, you may well prove Immortal
So consummate, consummately handled your prose is,
And your poems the summit of Poetry. Only,
Your death might so well, had you chosen,
Have silenced some brutes
Who deem that the odour and soul of the rose is
Matter to cozen
And barter about. As it is, they shall gloat
And ape and contort all the exquisite words that you wrote
Into gawds one might lay at the feet or the portal
Of their opulent bawds. So your flawless, cold words
Shall hinder
Our poor mortality.

III

Why *couldn't* you have left your pulse unheld
Once : for a moment ? Say, as the jaws of the grave
Opened to receive you ?
Why wouldn't you
Just for a breath forget to hold
Your breath ; forget to be cold,
Watchful, advisèd ; for ever pausing to frame
The sentence that froze
And shrivelled a thought that was carelessly brave—
The phrases you never could mould enough
Or render cold enough ? . . .
Your pulse shall go slow enough and you lie low enough
For ever, to-night when they leave you,
Rigid and cautious and grave,
Underneath mould enough,
In a silent chamber ;
But never more frigid or cold or containedly grave
Than of old you were, contriving your mayflies in amber. . . .

IV

Ah, why *couldn't* you ?
What a scroll, then, we might have upheld
At once ! To-day ! On the first, swift rumour of your death ;
Before ever the foreign clay of your grave
Was thrown up to receive you !
A scroll
Brave with the braveness of your fame,
Warm with the warmth of your name !
And, into the cold, shining webs you alone had the knowledge
to weave—
You,
Yourself, with a failing, last generous breath
Would have breathed such dyes and such tinctures of gold
That, incarnadined,

Not the most disintegrating autumn wind,
No moth gnawing, nor no eatings up of rust
Should have rendered them tenuous or, like your name
Already filmed with thin dust.

V

For that's how it is
Already. You, not yet beneath the earth,
Yet here, at home, you could not find one hearth
To crave your shadow falling from the ingle
Towards the curtains. This is your own land
And your face forgotten ! Did you have a face,
Eyes, heart to beat and circulate warm blood
Through chilly limbs ? Or, did you have a voice
To make one hearer thrill with joy ; a palate
For meats or the juice of the grape ? Could you rejoice
Over a little money ; did you ever know
The ups and downs of fortune quicken your pulse,
Engage in a wager ; yearn for pleasant sin ;
Live lecherously or contrive delights
From human passions ? Were you crossed in love
For a faithless harlot or the faithful wife
Of another's bed ? Oh, block of flawless jade,
Had you even a dog to wag its tail for you ?
We do not know. . . . I know you aimed at Fame
Consummately. Once I lived with you
Five years, day in day out ; and one could gather
So much from your unrevealing eyes and lips.
And whilst you sucked the last few pence from our purses
We know you made towards Immortality
Consummately, by means of unstirred prose
And stirless verses. . . . You may get it yet !
Only !
Will there be a face to look up from your page
Kindly and smiling into young men's eyes ?

Or a form that any woman would recognise
And deem it like her lover's. . . . As for us,
We crave to be remembered, warm, in the flesh ;
If only as those who beat their wives and soaked
Night-long in taverns ; whom the crowing cocks
Heard staggering homewards ; bulbous, veined-nosed,
Cut-pursey Falstaffs. . . . I had rather that
Than immortality of your frozen kind !
Yes, even that. . . . The grave is whist and lonely ;
One shivers at the image of dry decay
In the roots of the grass. . . . And I have sometimes thought
That if we, being years-long buried, caused to arise
In living minds, shapes of our shoulders, say,
Since once we had great rolling shoulder-blades
And found some Boswell ; or if our kindly hands
Seemed to give crusts to beggars, stroke old dogs,
Or carry sonnets to enraptured maids,
So that our vanished faces in our books
Were such as woman thought she recognised,
Deeming them like her lovers', known or imagined. . . .
Then, in our shoulders, drying in the earth,
Our desiccated fingers, fleshless features
A moment's tide of life might run again
And be warm and tickling. . . . Do you take me, you ?
Or is the thought too sordid ?
Only. . . . Only,
Your death that made us think upon our ends
—As, for sure it should do—makes us stretch our hands
Towards that lure of Immortality.
You wrote all your life for Immortality
Of a Parnassian, most impersonal shape.
But we, being bone and sinew, crave a kind,
A human, less erasing sort of grave ;
A death less passionless, a shade less blind
Than the great steam-roller you confronted ; you
Being no doubt more brave !

* * * * *

We read : You have died at a distance,
And that's all. That is all. It seemed queer
At first when we learned
That that must be all. You, dying so lonely
Where that foreign river flows
To its foreign sea,
And we, finding the news not strike on the ear
With any insistence ;
No mourning hatchment hanging on the portal
Of any mortal that one knows !
Think only,
Heaven knows, you may well prove immortal
Having consummately earned
Your Immortality !

PINS FOR WINGS

[By EMANUEL MORGAN.]

WILLIAM WATSON . .	A grey-maned lion. Heart-ache and tooth-ache, But royal.
T. S. ELIOT	The wedding-cake Of two tired cultures.
ROBERT GRAVES. . .	A khaki bib.
A. E.	One smoke-ring Through another.
BLISS CARMAN . . .	A hill With a hat on.

D. H. LAWRENCE . . .	Lovers Eating thistle-pie.
HENRY VAN DYKE . . .	A pulpit Slowly waltzing.
ARTHUR SYMONS . . .	Enchanted Roquefort.
JOHN GOULD FLETCHER .	A typewriter Surprising you in the dark.
ALICE MEYNELL . . .	Candles Burning For one another.
CHARLES WHARTON STORK.	Stilts Clasping.
EZRA POUND	A rhythmic busybody Announcing himself busy.
WILLIAM CARLOS WILLIAMS.	Carbolic acid In love.

ALFRED NOYES . . .	Robin Hood Singing hymns.
HARRY KEMP	Seven league boots On a linnet.
GORDON BOTTOMLEY . .	By a nymph Out of England.
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1920.

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